

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA**  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY**

**Subject**

Comprehensive Homeless Policy

**Policy  
Number**

A-128

**Page**

1 of 5

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to summarize the County's comprehensive response to homelessness.

The County is responsible for delivering basic health and supportive services to the region's homeless. However, provision of other facilities and services must be addressed by all cities with fair share contributions reflected in local budgets.

Linkages with the business, religious and nonprofit communities as partners in ending homelessness must be maintained and expanded.

This policy reflects the Continuum of Care approach, which emphasizes supporting self-sufficiency and transitional programs, rather than stop-gap emergency measures which fail to break the cycle of homelessness

**Background**

**Current Statistics:** The most recent published count conducted in January 2008 by the Regional Task Force on the Homeless (RTFH), reports a total of over 7,000 (7,582) urban and rural homeless in San Diego County. In addition, there are an estimated 1,000 farm workers and day laborers who live in encampments throughout the region.

However, information sources in the provider community based on inquiries and requests for assistance estimate that there may be more than 10,000 homeless persons throughout the County on any given day.

Overall the Region has only enough facilities to meet an estimated sixty percent of shelter needs on any given night. Almost all of these shelter spaces serve urban homeless individuals and families.

**Role of the Regional Task Force on the Homeless:** The Task Force addresses the issue of homelessness on region wide basis through statistical research, close contact with providers and funding agencies, advocacy, and technical and information services to those serving the homeless.

With its strong representation from local government, business, homeless services providers, and the religious community, the Task Force is committed to a coordinated countywide approach to homelessness and provides all service organizations in the region

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA**  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY**

**Subject**

Comprehensive Homeless Policy

**Policy  
Number**

A-128

**Page**

2 of 5

with information and statistics on the homeless population and homeless facilities and services.

**Role of the County:** The County plays four distinct roles in the delivery of services and facilities to the homeless including regional, municipal, Urban County and applicant for funds.

**Regional** - In its regional role, the County administers or delivers health and social services to the homeless in all incorporated cities as well as the unincorporated areas of the County. Funds for these services come primarily from the federal and state governments, although County general funds are also contributed.

**Municipal** - Cities are primarily responsible for providing housing opportunities for their residents, including those who are homeless. Like cities, the County also has a responsibility for providing adequate housing opportunities for its residents. For the County, however, that housing responsibility is limited to the unincorporated areas of the County.

**Urban County** - In its role as the Urban County, the County receives funds that can be used for services to homeless persons in the unincorporated area and the cities comprising the Urban County.

**Applicant for Funds** - In its role as applicant to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for competitive grants for the homeless, the County works collaboratively with the non-profit community and participating cities.

**Policy**

As resources permit, it is the policy of the Board of Supervisors to provide basic social and health services to the homeless throughout the region, to provide a fair share of other homeless facilities and services for unincorporated areas, and to coordinate with all cities in the Region to maximize the benefits from limited private and government resources to meet homeless needs. The following more explicitly outlines the County's policy:

1. **Coordination, Planning and Review:** The County will cooperate with other jurisdictions in developing overall planning and coordination systems to assist in closing service gaps to the homeless through participation on the Regional Task Force on the

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA**  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY**

**Subject**

Comprehensive Homeless Policy

**Policy  
Number**

A-128

**Page**

3 of 5

homeless and in development of applications and programs for federal and state assistance.

2. Community Awareness and Involvement: The County will participate in regional responses to homelessness by active participation on the Regional Task Force on the Homeless.

The County shares the vision of the Regional Task Force on the Homeless to end homelessness in San Diego County.

3. Regional Responsibility: The County of San Diego has a regional responsibility as provider of mental health, drug, alcohol, social, and health services for the homeless and other persons without means in the region. As the primary provider and provider of last resort for such services, it is appropriate that the

County receive the major share of funding from the federal and state governments for such programs.

In order to deliver services to the homeless in the most effective and cost-efficient manner, the County will cooperate with other jurisdictions, coalitions, advisory groups, and providers to identify gaps in services and to provide those services in cooperation with other jurisdictions and the nonprofit community to the extent possible. Cooperation is particularly important with the City of San Diego, where a large percentage of the urban homeless population is located.

The County will collaborate and form public-private partnerships with local business and industry, the private and non-profit sectors, educational and cultural institutions, and the religious community to reduce homelessness and its accompanying conditions throughout the County.

The County will also demonstrate its regional responsibility through its legislative and service delivery roles and by taking an active role with the Regional Task Force on the Homeless.

4. Priorities for Homeless Facilities and Services: The County will place its highest priority on assisting homeless families with children, and victims of domestic violence and special needs groups including the severely mentally ill, persons with AIDS/HIV, and those recovering from substance abuse.

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA**  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY**

**Subject**

Comprehensive Homeless Policy

**Policy  
Number**

A-128

**Page**

4 of 5

5. Leveraging and Resource Management: The County supports an increased role in meeting the problems of homelessness from the private sector through funds, in-kind, and volunteer support and will evaluate its funding decisions partially on the basis of other funding sources.

The County will use its resources to leverage support for homeless services from the State and Federal government and other funding sources. The County will advise its congressional and state delegations of its determination to achieve fair share funding for the San Diego Region.

Agencies utilizing other funding sources will be given priority in funding decisions so as to leverage scarce County resources.

6. Facility Siting and Distribution: The County supports the equitable distribution of facilities and services throughout the Region so that no one jurisdiction or community is impacted by providing more than its fair share of facilities and services.

The County will work directly with neighborhoods, businesses, community organizations, private sector partnerships, nonprofits and service providers to facilitate any site selection or approval processes within the unincorporated area.

The County will meet the requirements of Board of Supervisors Policy F-20 Location of County Facilities on criteria notification and local concern issues when siting homeless facilities.

7. Fair Share Contributions by All Jurisdictions: The County recognizes that homelessness is a regional problem and that all jurisdictions must address homeless services and shelter needs.

Fair share contributions of individual cities will be an important consideration in determining use of County funds to meet homeless needs within cities. Fair share will be defined as the relationship of a jurisdiction's contributions to its share of the region's homeless population.

The source of funds will also guide the County's investment in homeless services and shelter options. Funding designated for specific communities will be used only in those communities unless substantial regional benefit can be demonstrated.

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA**  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY**

**Subject**

Comprehensive Homeless Policy

**Policy  
Number**

A-128

**Page**

5 of 5

8. Evaluation and Outcome Measures: Factors related to program performance, program effectiveness, and cost will be evaluated in making County funding decisions. Outcome measures developed by County departments and the Regional Task Force on the Homeless will be used to determine program success/failure. Applicants for County funding will be required to demonstrate outcome measures for all program participants.

9. Inclement Weather Shelters: County policy regarding inclement weather shelter is summarized in Board of Supervisors Policy G-12 Inclement Weather Shelter Plan for the Homeless.

**Sunset Date**

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by 12/31/2015.

**Board Action**

4/8/97 (16)  
3/12/2002 (10)  
06/21/05 (16)  
04-07-09 (7)

**CAO Reference**

1. Department of Housing and Community Development
2. Health and Human Services Agency